



Division of Fleet Operations

Safe Driver Newsletter

STAY IN YOUR SEAT – BUCKLE UP!

Volume 1
March 2007

Read All About It!

Welcome to the Division of Fleet Operations' first safety newsletter. Every quarter you will receive a one page email with tidbits on driver safety. The goal is to help our drivers be safer: for your sake as well as the State of Utah and its citizens. The number of accidents for this fiscal year, as well as previous years, is on the rise. Let's take a moment to be safe. "Stay in your seat – Buckle up!" is our theme for 2007. Seatbelts save lives! Fleet Operations is pleased to announce our driver training programs for you, the driver. **Check out our website at: www.fleet.utah.gov. Go to the calendar for training dates.**

Safety belts are the most effective means of saving lives and reducing serious injuries in traffic crashes. They're also the law.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that seat belts save 9,500 lives in the United States each year. It is also estimated that an additional 9,000 lives would be saved and 160,000 non-fatal injuries would be prevented each year if all motor vehicle occupants ages 5 years and older properly used restraint devices (seat belts, booster seats) all of the time.

Safety belts, [air bags](#) and proper [child safety seats](#), when used consistently and correctly, can significantly reduce the rate of injury in a crash. A crash study conducted by the University of California, Irvine found: "Driver restraint use was the strongest predictor of child restraint use." Almost 40% of children who ride with unbelted drivers are themselves unrestrained.

The number of lives saved could be substantially increased if more people used safety belts.

Make sure the belt is worn snugly over the lower part of your pelvis. If the belt is allowed to ride up across your stomach, it will be pushed against your intestines, liver or other internal

organs in a crash. Injury to these vital organs can be fatal. Always buckle up, even if pregnant. Make sure the belt stays snug and well below your abdomen.

Sit up straight. Slouching causes the lap belt to ride up. A belt that is worn too loosely could allow you to slide under it in a crash.

Check your lap belt several times during a trip, even a short one. Make sure it stays low and snug. In some lap/shoulder belt systems, a tug on the shoulder belt will tighten your lap belt.

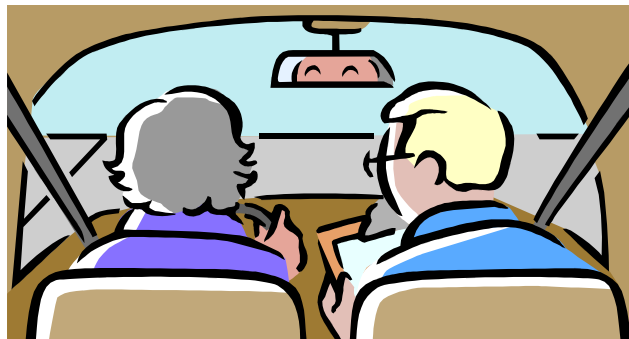
Consider clothing. A heavy coat can make it difficult to wear your belt correctly. For very bulky coats, it's best to take them off. To get the best possible fit when you wear your coat buckle up and then tuck any excess bulk towards your side. This will allow the lap belt to make proper close contact over the pelvic bones. A short jacket can easily be pulled out from under the belt.

Position your shoulder belt over the top part of your shoulder and across your chest. That distributes crash forces over a large area of your rib cage and protects your soft organs underneath.

Make sure the shoulder belt lies comfortably snug against your body. Some shoulder belts work like window shades. Each time you lean forward, even a little, and then back the shoulder belt loosens and stays that way unless it's tugged on. There should never be more than one inch of slack between you and your shoulder belt. Get into the habit of checking your belt often.

Don't tuck your shoulder belt underneath your arm. In a crash, this puts pressure on your ribs, which are thin and easily broken. Broken ribs may be pushed inward potentially causing serious damage to your internal organs.

Secure your children safely. Children who have outgrown their regular car seats still may not be tall enough to safely wear a shoulder belt. It may cross their neck or face. A correct fit can be achieved by raising the child up on a special car booster seat. Select a booster seat that will keep the lap belt low across the child's thighs or hips.



This vehicle is NOT!! moving until you fasten your seatbelt!

